

WELCOME

Welcome to our Westminster Kids Early Learning Program!

Our purpose is to provide a Christian environment that will allow children to grow and develop spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually. The Early Learning Committee and the Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church govern us. Our program is part of our church's ministry as an outreach to the local community. We look forward to having your children with us in this program.

We provide numerous experiences that stimulate a child's curiosity about the world and everything God created. We incorporate *ABeka*, a Bible-based curriculum, that offers nurturing in spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social, and physical areas of growth. Our philosophy is to assist the families in providing a safe, loving environment in which a child can learn. Currently, we are not required to be licensed by the State of Tennessee, however, we model our program according to state regulations.

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”
Proverbs 22:6

We're Building Temples

*This child fast asleep, looks so content as I watch over her bed.
But I need to think back on the day we have spent, to all I did and said.
Did she feel safe and know that I care? Did I say the things that made her feel loved?
For my life and my words form the image of the person she someday will become.*

*We're building temples for Jesus to live in;
Rooms warm and welcome where He'll reside.
These children are our own
But someday when they're grown we pray they'll be the temples where Jesus will abide.*

*Lord help us to build a foundation of trust knowing that we love them so.
With walls of pure faith that will stand against the winds of doubt that blow.
Let your love be the roof that covers their lives and protects them from the rains of defeat.
Help mold in their hearts open windows where the light of Your salvation will stream.*

Shepard's Fold Music Ó1986

Goals

Every class is made up of a teacher and an assistant. Each teacher will set their own classroom goals and objectives to strive for according to their curriculum and age group. The following are goals that we use to guide us in every classroom.

1. To provide an atmosphere that will enable children to learn about God at an early age, feel positive about themselves, know how unique and special they are, and know Who created them.
2. To provide an environment that stimulates each child's creative and natural curiosity.
3. To provide opportunities to grow in faith and affirm God's love.
4. To experience love, trust, and acceptance in his/her relationship with others.
5. To develop friendships and encourage behavior that promotes mutual respect.
6. To encourage learning that will be developmentally appropriate for every child.

Orientation

Parent orientation will be scheduled before the first day. You will be notified of the date. This will be an opportunity for children to meet their teachers and for parents to express any concerns or ask any questions they might have. We will also discuss our program, curriculum, expectations and important policies and procedures for your child's classroom. You will be notified in advance of the date and time for your specific orientation. Please bring this handbook with you to the orientation meeting.

Age Requirements

Westminster Kids Early Learning Program serves is available for children 15 months to 4 years of age ***on or before September 30th of the current year.*** We abide strictly to this policy and feel that it is only to your child's benefit to do so.

The State of Tennessee specifically states that: "Children entering kindergarten shall be five (5) years of age on or before September 30 of the current kindergarten term." TCA 49-6-201(b)(3)."

Enrollment

Application must be completed annually with a **non-refundable** fee per child. Current students, their siblings and members of Westminster Presbyterian Church will have first priority. Additional enrollment will be accepted according to dated application and registration fee. Each child must have paid their yearly supply fee and completed a child history, emergency information, and departure form prior to their first day of attending. Enrollment is contingent upon approval of the Early Learning Committee.

If your child is entering our 3 year old program we strongly encourage your child to be potty-trained. If this milestone has not been reached, please let us know as we can work with you as a team to accomplish this. We know there are certain instances where children are delayed in potty-training and we fully understand and are willing to help. Appropriate supplies will need to be brought in as needed (ie: wipes, pull-ups, etc.) We use regular toilets in our program.

Westminster Kids Early Learning Program admits children of any race, creed, color, religion, national or ethnic origin. We extend all rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to children in the class and do not discriminate on any basis in the administration of its policies and other programs.

Immunizations

Immunizations must be current and dates **MUST** be given to the program on forms available at your doctor's office or current health department. This is also required prior to the first day of class. Forms may be faxed (to the attention of the Early Learning Program) directly to our church office by the doctor's office to 423-283-4943.

Arrival

Entrance to the building is only granted through the main doors into the Narthex. Teachers only have 30 minutes before class begins and 30 minutes after class has ended to prepare for their day. We ask that you respect their time by waiting to enter the classroom at 9:00am. This way your child will be able to receive full attention upon their arrival. *Children should not be allowed to enter the building on their own.*

Class begins promptly at **9:05am**. **We are unable to accept children earlier than 9:00am per state regulations.** Parents must check their children in at their classroom. We recommend you do not bring your children any later than 9:15, as this disturbs the classroom and other children.

Pick-up

Each child must be checked out at his/her classroom by 12:00pm. Please do not be late. At orientation we will supply your family with 2 pick-up cards for your child. Only authorized persons picking up your child should have a card with them. If they do not, they will not be able to get your child. (Only exceptions are cleared with the Director prior to pick-up and person picking up will have to show appropriate identification to the Director prior to going to the child's classroom) Please have this card with you while in the building each day. This is a new security measure put in place so that we can keep your child as safe as possible. We are here to provide a safe environment for your children and appreciate your help in partnering in this effort.

Snacks

Parents will be assigned by their child's teacher a week to bring snack to his/her child's classroom. Nutritional snacks are encouraged. You will be informed of any food allergies in your child's class. If your child has any food allergies, please be sure to fill out information on the enrollment form.

Communication

Teachers will inform parents about their child's day by sending home a daily information sheet. Teachers will also send home monthly calendars and newsletters. A conference may be scheduled ANYTIME during the year. Please call the office and the teacher will return your call. (Please do not have or schedule a conference during drop-off or pick-up time. Teachers will not be able to give full attention to you or the students.)

The Director will send home monthly newsletters and other pertinent information as needed over the course of the school year. *We will also have an ELP Update board with newsletters and pertinent information posted as well as a ELP Community board announcing various activities going on with the ELP parents and teachers outside of the Director's office.*

Room Moms

****This year (2010-2011) each class would love to have "Room Moms" to assist teachers with special classroom activities, events and other odds and ends. Please let your child's teacher know if you would like to serve in this capacity. This should not require much time and is a shared duty, so it will be what you desire to put into it. ****

Dress For Children

Please dress your children in casual clothes appropriate to the seasons. Clothing that is hard to manage make bathroom time difficult and makes the child feel less independent. Each child is encouraged to wear quiet or rubber soled shoes in the classroom. Please bring a change of clothing, which should be labeled, and left at the program in the event of sickness, bathroom accidents, or spilled drink. Parents of 15-24 month olds and 2 year olds (3 year olds if needed) should also bring wipes refills and diapers for their child clearly labeled with their name. These teachers will provide you with a list of items needed prior to school starting. **PLEASE REMOVE ALL DRAWSTRINGS FROM THE NECKLINE OF CHILDREN'S CLOTHING, FOR SAFETY REASONS.**

Supply Fee

At the beginning of the school year, a supply fee of \$60 will be due prior to the first day of attending. This may be paid in full at the beginning of the year or ½ at the beginning of the year and ½ mid-way through the school year. See the attached Fee Schedule.

Health Policy

Westminster Presbyterian Church will provide an environment, which is safe as possible for children with regard to exposure to infectious or potentially infectious disease processes using the following guidelines as procedures in appropriate situations, as well as obtaining information from the CDC periodically.

The program reserves the right to refuse to accept any child who exhibits signs and symptom of illness at the time of arrival to the church. Signs and symptoms may include but are not limited to evidence of an upper respiratory infection, earache, sore throat, cough, unexplained rash,

crusty, matted or oozing eyes (pink eye), communicable disease (chicken pox, staph infection, strep, impetigo) or gastrointestinal symptoms including diarrhea. At no time will a child be permitted to stay with symptoms of illness or a fever greater than 100 degrees, (or has had one in the past 24 hours).

Should a child present signs/symptoms of infection, with or without a fever, while here, they will be isolated from the other children in the Director's office until you (or other authorized persons) can pick them up. Please pick your child up as quickly as possible, once receiving the call. In order to expedite this process, please make sure all information on file in the Director's office is up to date.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF THEY DISPLAY ANY SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS.

Children on antibiotic therapy may not return to class for **24 hours** after the first dose of antibiotics. Children may return to school after they have been free from a fever (without aid of Tylenol or Ibuprofen) for more than 24 hours.

The teacher and assistant will clean the room/surfaces immediately after experiencing a sick child in their classroom to minimize possible contamination. Bleach solution will be used for soiled surfaces.

Medicine

We will only administer emergency medication (ie: an epi-pen if needed for seizures or allergic reactions--provided by parents with written instructions and kept in cabinet in the Director's office). Any other medicine will not be given to your children while at the program at any time or for any reason.

Cubbies

Children will have a cubby labeled with their name on it. This is where your children will keep their belongings and any information to be sent home to parents will be placed. Please try to check it every day.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is an important part of our curriculum and we plan to take children outdoors each day. Please dress your child appropriately. On days when weather does not permit children to go outside, we will plan appropriate indoor activities that encourage motor development.

Discipline

It is the goal of the school to help children learn to take responsibility for their own behavior. Please be assured, we will use the separation and time out method of classroom misbehavior. Never will a child be isolated outside the classroom! Communication between parents and classroom teachers is very important. You will be contacted to reinforce our positive manner into appropriate classroom behavior if needed.

We understand that children will sometimes act out at school in ways that they do not do at home. Please understand any information told to you by your child's teacher(s) is to help identify the problem and help with the solution. We encourage any questions you might have about your children. Please come to the teacher or the Director immediately if you have any questions or concerns.

Classroom Rules

The following rules will be used with your children in the classroom:

- § Be kind to your friends. Use kind words and actions with each other.
- § Use walking feet and inside voices when we are in the classroom and building.
- § Help keep the classroom neat. Put materials and activities away when you finish.
- § Be safe.

Evacuation Policy

An Emergency Preparedness Plan has been established to cover any disasters or instances (ie: fire, tornado, earthquake, floods, chemical spills or chemical or nuclear warfare, etc.) that might take place during program hours. We will constantly strive to provide the safest possible care for your child.

In case of fire and/or explosion in or around the building, the school will evacuate the building and proceed to the upper parking lot of the church. Each teacher will take their attendance chart with them in order to take roll and take a head count. We will periodically have fire drills to practice this procedure.

In case of a bomb threat, the building will be evacuated and the police notified. The school will evacuate the building and proceed to the upper parking lot of the church.

Birthdays

Please tell the teacher ahead of time if you would like to celebrate a birthday at school by bringing in a special snack for the class to share. This is so we may inform you of any class allergies and not have 2 parties on the same day. Keep it simple and age-appropriate by offering cookies and special napkins. If you are going to invite the entire class to a party off campus you may give out the invitations at school. Otherwise we ask that you please deliver invitations outside of school.

Personal Toys

Please have your child leave all personal toys at home. Sharing a favorite toy is not an easy task for anyone, especially children. Items will be permitted during show and tell, but those items will be kept in their cubbie until needed to prevent conflict, loss or breakage. Aggressive toys (ie: guns, swords, knives, war toys, scary characters, etc) will not be permitted. They only facilitate uncontrolled behavior and aggressive actions between the children.

Bad Weather

The Westminster Kids Early Learning Program will follow the **Johnson City schools** weather closings. If they are closed due to weather, illness or national security we will also be closed for that day. *****If the Johnson City schools have a delay we will start school at 10:00am, unless otherwise announced*****. We announce closings specifically on www.tricitie.com, WJHL-Channel 11 and its sister television/radio stations. We will make every effort to alert the media by the 11:00pm news the evening before. ***If we are not out, but you still feel uneasy about sending them or picking them up early, we will leave that to your discretion. Please err on the side of caution.*** If we ever dismiss before the end of the day, you will be notified and need to pick up your child as soon as possible so staff can pick up their children.

Daily Information Sheets

Daily Information sheets will be sent home daily to let you know what the child did for that day.

Incident Reports

An incident report will be sent home with your child in case of an incident where he/she experienced an injury. All information regarding child to child conflicts will be kept confidential.

Tuition

See attached Fee Schedule.

Tuition is due the 1st of every month. It is late after the 10th. After the 10th the late fee charge is \$15.00. There will be a \$25.00 charge for all returned checks in addition to you supplying us with a replacement check for the tuition due. We are not allowed to send it back through your bank. Any subsequent returned checks will result in a \$20 charge being added and cash only will be accepted for replacement of the check.

Late Tuition Fees: The program will follow these guidelines for late payment:

1. REMIND A reminder will be sent to the parent when payment is 2 weeks past the due date.
2. COUNSEL At three weeks the director will call parents to discuss their balance. At that time arrangements will be made to bring the account up to date ASAP.
3. SUSPEND If the above plan has not been carried out in 2 or more weeks, the parent will be notified that their child or children will be suspended from the program for 1 week. Tuition is still due for that week. The balance will be expected to be brought up to date as in the original agreement before the child will be admitted to return to the program.
4. DISMISS If the above cannot be attained in a satisfactory manner, dismissal is in order at this time.

All accounts must be current before the child can be enrolled the following year. If the parent is in disagreement they can appeal to the Early Learning Committee in writing.

Late Pick-up Fees

Our Early Learning Program **hours are from 9:05-12:00**. There will be a late pick-up fee of \$5.00 for every 15 minutes. This will be added to your monthly statement.

Withdrawal

If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from the school for any reason please give us at least two weeks notice prior to your departure date. You will owe nothing past that two week period. If tuition has been paid in advance a refund will be issued. If you approach us ON your last day (or a few days prior) you will owe two weeks tuition from that day. Withdrawal forms must be acquired from the Director's office.

Termination

Any of the following situations shall constitute the removal of a student from the class or program:

1. A child who is excessively disruptive or exhibits exceptionally aggressive behavior which threatens the safety and well-being of self or others in the class.
2. A child requiring constant one-on-one attention from the teacher, thus taking away the teacher's attention to the rest of the class.
3. A two-week unexplained absence from class when the teacher and Director have been unable to reach the family and tuition is past-due.
4. When tuition falls more than 2 weeks behind the 10th of the month due date (see Late Tuition Fees).
5. Any situation deemed important enough to require the Early Learning Committee and Director's attention.

Staff

Our staff is made up of teachers and assistants with a servant heart that want to further God's kingdom in teaching your children. You will find that our lead teachers have their Early Childhood Teaching Degree or a Teaching Degree and/or experience in teaching our *ABeka* curriculum. They have been thoroughly interviewed and we have performed background and reference checks on them. We provide our teachers with training and certification in CPR and First Aid. We have full confidence in their qualifications and have placed them in the classroom setting that best suits our classroom and your children's needs.

Hints for smoother school days:

1. Prepare your child ahead of time about coming to the program.
2. When checking your child in at the room, reassure them with a hug, a kiss, and “I love you, I’ll be back” – then EXIT. At this point it will do no good to stay until they settle down. They will not settle down as long as they can see you. They see your reluctance to leave as meaning that you are not quite sure about leaving them in this place.
3. Realize that there may be tears at first, but it will pass OR we’ll call you. Please call anytime you desire to check on your child. It is NOT a bother to us to receive a call from you – ANYTIME!
4. Be on time! Each minute is needed for preparation toward group time. They need time to settle before group begins.
5. Don’t be late for pick-up. It’s unsettling to them when they are the last one picked up.

Parent Agreement

I, _____, whose child _____ is
enrolled in the Westminster Kids Early Learning Program, have received a copy of the Parent's
Handbook, and I agree to abide by them.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Fee Schedule for 2010-2011

Class 1: serves ages 15 months - 2 years. This class will be available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. You may choose all 4 days or you may choose one of the following 2 day options: Monday and Thursday or Tuesday and Friday. Tuition for this age group for the 4 day program is \$145 per month. For the 2 day program tuition is \$115 per month.

Class 2: serves age of 2 years. This class will meet 4 days Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Tuition for this class is \$145 per month.

Class 3: serves age of 3 years. This class will meet 4 days Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Tuition for this class is \$145 per month.

Class 4: serves age of 4 years. This class will meet 4 days Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Tuition for this class is \$145 per month.

****This year (2011-2012) we will be offering a Multiple Child Discount. This will apply a price reduction of \$10 on monthly tuition per child subsequent to the oldest enrolled.****

**** There is a one-time yearly supply fee of \$60 for all classes.** We offer 2 methods of payment:
1) payment in full at the beginning of the school year or 2) ½ payment (\$30) at the beginning of the school year and ½ payment (\$30) mid-way through the school year (upon return from Christmas break in January)..**

Permission to be Contacted

I, _____, do / do not (please circle one) give permission for my name and my child's name, address and phone number or picture to be placed in the following:

- Westminster Kids Directory
- Westminster Presbyterian Church
- Westminster Kid's Early Learning Program website

My child's photograph may/may not (please circle one) be published for use on publication materials or website of Westminster Presbyterian Church Early Learning Program. Use by anyone else is strictly prohibited.

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

Date: _____